

Message Text

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44-L

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 MC-02 EB-07

AID-05 COME-00 /077 W

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R 161535Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3109

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 13313

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT, UG

SUBJ: AMIN VISIT TO ITALY

REF: STATE 218199

1. MFA SOURCES CONFIRM THAT AMIN DEPARTED ROME FOR ALGIERS SEPTEMBER 11. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO UNEARTH ANY INDICATION OF MEDICAL CARE FOR HIM IN ITALY.

2. WE UNDERSTAND A PRIMARY PURPOSE OF AMIN VISIT WAS TO EXPLORE A POSSIBLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WITH GOI. WE HAVE NO HARD INFORMATION AS YET, AND WILL REPORT SUBSEQUENTLY.

3. AN AMEBASSY CONTACT HAS GIVEN US A RUNDOWN ON AMIN'S CONVERSATIONS IN MILAN WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AGUSTA AERONAUTICAL FIRM. AMIN WAS INTERESTED IN THE PURCHASE OF FOUR OR FIVE UNARMED CHINOOK HELICOPTERS FROM AGUSTA TO USE IN CONNECTION WITH CATTLE THIEVERY AND TRIBAL PROBLEMS. REPORTEDLY AMIN WAS MORE INTERESTED IN HAGGLING OVER PRICE THAN IN ARRANGING FINANCING ASSISTANCE, WITH A CASH PURCHASE LIKELY AS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN PRIOR UGANDA BUYS FROM COMPANY.

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SOURCE EXPLAINED THAT SINCE AGUSTA'S CHINOOK SALES TERRITORY

DOES NOT INCLUDE UGANDA, FIRM IS CONTACTING BOEING, THE
LICENSOR, RE POSSIBILITY OF AN ITALIAN SALE.

4. AMIN ALSO INDICATED HE WAS INTERESTED IN POSSIBLE PURCHASE
OF EQUIPMENT FROM OTO MELARA (PRESUMABLY APC'S), BUT WE HAVE NO
DETAILS TO DATE.

5. BEYOND FOREGOING, AGUSTA PEOPLE SAY THEY FOUND BIG DADDY A
COMPLETE SURPRISE. THEY DESCRIBE HIM AS IMPRESIVE, CHARMING,
INTELLIGENT, AND AWARE OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS PRESIDENT OF
THE OAU. HE SAID HE IS A FIRM FRIEND OF THE WEST AND WANTS TO
REMAIN SO. GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, FOR WHICH
AMIN HAS NOTHING BUT RESPECT AND ADMIRATION, ARE A KEY FACTOR
IN THIS EQUATION. NO ONE NEED FEAR UGANDA'S MOTIVES OR AGGRE-
SSION FROM UGANDA. CERTAINLY AS PRESIDENT OF OAU HE WOULD NEVER
ATTACK AN AFRICAN STATE. IN REGARD TO THE HILL AFFAIR, THE
THING HAD BEEN BADLY HANDLED BY THE PRESS. HE HAD NEVER REALLY
INTENDED TO KILL HILL. INSTEAD THIS WAS A FORM OF PRESSURE ON
THE UK TO SUPPLY THE TANK PARTS WHICH THEY HAD EARLIER AGREED
TO SUPPLY, A PROMISE ON WHICH THEY HAD DEFAULTED. VOLPE

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